

BELLEVUE CHALLENGE COURSE
AT EASTGATE PARK



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The following questions and answers are for B.O.L.D. programs

What is a Challenge Course?

A challenge course is a collection of activities requiring problem solving, communication and team work. The Bellevue Challenge Course is built in the forest using poles, cables, ropes and lumber. Participants are challenged to solve problems with guidance from trained staff.

What is the Low Course?

The low course is made up of several activities which encourage groups to work together to solve complex problems. Often, low course activities cannot be completed unless the group is able to effectively make use of all of the skills found in the group. Low course activities are highly effective for teaching leadership, communication and problem solving.

What is the Vertical Play Pen?

The Vertical Play Pen (VPP) is a high course activity which involves the entire group. Three people at one time attempt to climb up ladders, ropes, logs and tires to reach the top of the play pen while belayed from the ground by the remainder of the team. The VPP helps groups learn to work together, trust and transfer learning from one small team to another.

What is the High Course?

The High Course is designed to provide individuals the opportunity to challenge themselves with the support of their team. This is the most individual of all the activities and the most dramatic. Participants complete activities by crossing cables and ropes from one pole to another. An example is stepping from one hanging plank to another. Individuals are supported by team mates who help assure each is safe and offer advice and encouragement.

What will we do at the challenge course?

On the low and portable course, you will work with your group of up to 15 people, to solve problems or complete tasks. For example, you may be challenge to deliver a bucket of "medicine" across an imaginary river using a rope swing. You might be challenge to get every member of your group from one side of the giant spider's web to the other without touching it.

On the high course, you will cross swinging platforms, or walk on cables with ropes for your hands or cross a cargo net. The high course gives participants the opportunity to examine how they react to stressful or fearful situations as well as how they accept support from team members. Participants can also look carefully at how they problem solve when confronted with confusing or challenging tasks. Many participants state that they were able to confront their self-imposed limitations when they finish a high challenge course. All of these challenges are completed while attached to the safety system of the course.

What can my group expect to gain from the experience?

Groups can gain the following benefits and skills on a challenge course:

- Team work skills
- Trust
- Greater knowledge of self and others
- Respect and Responsibility
- Compassion
- FUN!!
- Communication skills
- Problem Solving tools
- Leadership skills

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What size groups?

Groups can be as small as 8 and as large as 32. Larger groups may be accommodated with special arrangement. The base fee is for any size group up to 12. A per person fee is added for groups larger than 12.

How much time will the challenge course take?

A typical course is 4 to 6 hours long. Programs can be as long as 10 hours although this is not recommended. Individuals will be mentally and physically taxed at the end of a day. The value of a challenge course experience is based more on what individuals do with the lessons learned and how they apply them to their everyday situation rather than the length of time spent on the course.

Is the challenge course safe?

Challenge courses are always staffed by trained and skilled staff whose first priority is the safety of participants. While it is unlikely, it is possible for a person to be injured on the low course. On the high course, participants wear safety harness and are always connected to the safety system of the course. Some participants will be tired after a high course experience.

The course was built and is operated in accordance with the standards set by the Association for Challenge Course Technology. These standards describe the proper methods and required strength ratings for equipment, frequency of course inspections, and the training required for operators.

Are staff trained?

Staff have at least 40 hours of training on ropes course that includes: working with groups, safety, rescues, inspection, and educational models. Many have more than 10 years' experience. Staff are drawn from schools, consulting firms and adventure programs.

When is the challenge course open?

The Bellevue Challenge Course is open year round when the South Bellevue Community Center is open. Warmer months are recommended.

How do I book a course?

Programs are scheduled by either the City of Bellevue Parks & Community Services NW Teambuilding, LLC and billed through the City of Bellevue Parks and Community Services. Programs can be scheduled up to one year in advance.

How often is the course inspected?

Staff inspect the course each day before and after each group uses the course. The course is also inspected each year by a challenge course professional who assures that the course continues to meet the stringent standards of the Association for Challenge Course Technology.